METHODISM
in
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

1900-1956

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by

Frederick A. Shippey

Central BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

METHODISM IN KANSAS CITY AND VICINITY

Kansas City, Kansas

A Study of Church Trends and Characteristics

1900-1956

by

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FOREWORD

Methodism has had a great past in Kansas City, Kansas; we are also confident that it has a great future. This will not just happen, however, it will take devoted leadership and vision on the part of our laymen and ministers alike.

Location is one important item in the success of a church. We try to choose our new sites carefully and the District Board on Church Location and Building helps the District Superintendent in this important work. We face a greater problem in dealing with the location of established churches. In spite of this, Methodist Churches have been moving in Kansas City, Kansas, to keep pace with the best opportunities. There is a long list of mergers and relocations which have taken place since 1900.

Bishop Dawson and many of us feel that it is time again to rethink Methodism in Kansas City, Kansas. Certainly we don't want to move away and leave an area just because a different group of people with a different economic level has moved in. We are concerned that we have neglected certain areas; in other areas we have several Methodist Churches with widely overlapping parishes. We have not ministered to the community as efficiently and effectively as it is possible to do.

The first step seems to be to find out what the facts are as far as our present ministry is concerned. Representatives from our churches agreed to ask Dr. Frederick A. Shippey of Drew University to make a study. It is not his purpose to tell us what to do; we have asked him to gather the facts and interpret them to us. The decisions, if any are to be made, will have to come from the member churches in this our Methodist family.

On the following pages you will find Dr. Shippey's report and I hope you will study it carefully. May it help us to see the picture and give us a desire to do what is best through the Methodist Church in Kansas City, Kansas and vicinity.

Robert B. Kendall
District Superintendent

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey is to give research attention to Methodism in Kansas City and environs. It is hoped that a systematic investigation based upon scientific procedure will yield insight for solving long range and critical problems within the denomination.

To make the data and findings accessible to all interested persons, liberal use was made of a non-technical universe of discourse and wherever possible charts, maps and tables were utilized to highlight important information. Each local Methodist church can find itself in these pages and at the same time catch a glimpse of the overall denominational situation. This bifocal feature increases the pragmatic value of the report.

May I suggest that each local church name a special committee to make a careful study of the entire report, giving particular attention to the section which describes one's own situation. Each church should devote at least one entire meeting of its Official Board or Board of Stewards, to a discussion led by the committee. Perhaps some churches may wish to schedule a series of short reports to the Official Board over a period of months. Adult classes and other groups customarily study the entire report and utilize it as a basis of rewarding discussion. Many values will emerge from a wise reading of this publication.

It is a pleasant task to acknowledge the assistance of many agencies and persons who cooperated to make the study possible. To single out all individuals to whom appreciation is due would lengthen the introduction greatly. However, one must recognize the excellent leadership provided by Dr. Robert B. Kendall, District Superintendent. Mr. Ramon Duran of the City Planning Commission furnished valued materials and suggestions. Many other individuals and agencies shared publications and insights. Methodism is thankful for these courtesies. Finally to the many pastors and laymen of the twelve reporting churches is extended a grateful word for cooperative labors. The survey project could not have been completed without the combined efforts of these many loyal persons and agencies.

Frederick A. Shippey

Table of Contents

FOREWORD by Dr. Robert B. Kendall

INTRODUCTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I POPULATION AND STRUCTURE OF SURVEY AREA 1

Boundaries of the Survey Area; Population Trends 1900-1960; Non-White Trends & Areas of Settlement; Structure of Survey Area.

TABLE NO. I Population Trends 1900-1960 2
TABLE NO. II Non-White Population Trends 4
FIGURE 1 Area of Negro Settlement 3
FIGURE 2 A Zoning Map 6

II METHODIST TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS 8

Membership & Church School Trends 1900-1956; Toward Effective Church Size; How Methodists Earn a Living; Characteristics of Local Church Members.

TABLE NO. III Membership & Church School Trends . . 9
TABLE NO. IV Employed Methodists & Population . . . 12
TABLE NO. V Membership & Financial Traits 13
FIGURE 3 Methodist Trends & Problems 10

III PARISH GEOGRAPHY AND METHODIST PLANNING 16

Parish Boundaries and Service Outreach; A Master Parish for Kansas City

TABLE NO. VI Residence Proximity of Methodists . . 17
FIGURE 4 A Master Parish Map 18

IV HIGHLIGHTS, PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 22

Summary and Highlights; Problems and Recommendations

FIGURE 5 Overlapping Parishes 23

CHAPTER I

POPULATION AND STRUCTURE OF SURVEY AREA

Methodism in Kansas City and vicinity has been maintained continuously for at least one hundred and fourteen years. All the manifold conditions of fortune to which residents were exposed have beseiged the work of the denomination. Indeed the latter has weathered many storms and testings. Now it confronts the opportunities and problems of this day and seeks to thread its way carefully among the pitfalls. More than all else Methodism desires to bring its important ministry to a spiritually needy generation. This is a local task.

The present report is an attempt to summarize a large body of facts and findings in a brief compass. One outcome of the survey project is to underscore the information, processes and trends which can furnish direction in Methodist planning and church adjustment. This report is a source book by which answers to difficult problems may be found.

BOUNDARIES OF THE SURVEY AREA

In geographical extent the survey embraces the city of Kansas City plus the two adjacent townships to the west - Quindaro and Wyandotte. All three territories comprise but a part of Wyandotte County. In character this vast natural area which lies between the Kansas and Missouri Rivers at their confluence ranges from a thriving modern city to relatively secluded rural neighborhoods. Twelve Methodist churches are located in the survey area.

With reference to time, the study embraces a period of fifty-six years - the first half of the twentieth century. Data were procured to provide a comparison of population trends with membership and church school trends. Selected relevant additional materials are presented in the report to round out an adequate background for the intelligent discussion of the work of Methodism. Highlights are stressed here rather than exhaustive detail.

POPULATION TRENDS 1900-1960

More than one hundred fifty thousand people currently reside in the survey area, whereas fifty years ago the population aggregated approximately one-third as large or 57,571 persons. A survey of population trends by unit of area is provided by TABLE NO. I. A conservative forecast for 1960 is likewise included.

City Population Trends. Kansas City gained in population size across the years since the turn of the century. From data presented in TABLE NO. I, it can be noted that growth has been relatively steady but unspectacular. In 1900, 51,418 residents made their homes in the city. By 1950 this figure had increased to 129,553, representing an increase of 78,135 persons or 152.0 per cent.

During the shorter time period of 1930-1950 gains were decelerated to 7,696 individuals or 6.3 per cent. Attention should be drawn to the fact that a slight loss in residents (399 persons) was recorded

TABLE NO. I
General Population Trends 1900-1960
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

	KANSAS CITY		QUINDARO TWP		WYANDOTTE TWP		
Year	Pop.	Change(%)	Pop.	Change(%)	Pop.	Change(%)	Total
1900	51,418	-	2,810	-	3,343	-	57,571
1910	82,331	60.1	2,161	-23.1	1,771	-47.0	86,263
1920	101,177	22.9	3,435	59.0	1,987	12.2	106,599
1930	121,857	20.4	5,300	54.3	3,435	72.9	130,592
1940	121,458	-0.3	6,949	31.1	4,447	29.5	132,854
1950	129,553	6.7	11,050	59.0	7,064	58.9	147,667
1960	139,500*	-	16,500*	-	10,800*	-	166,800

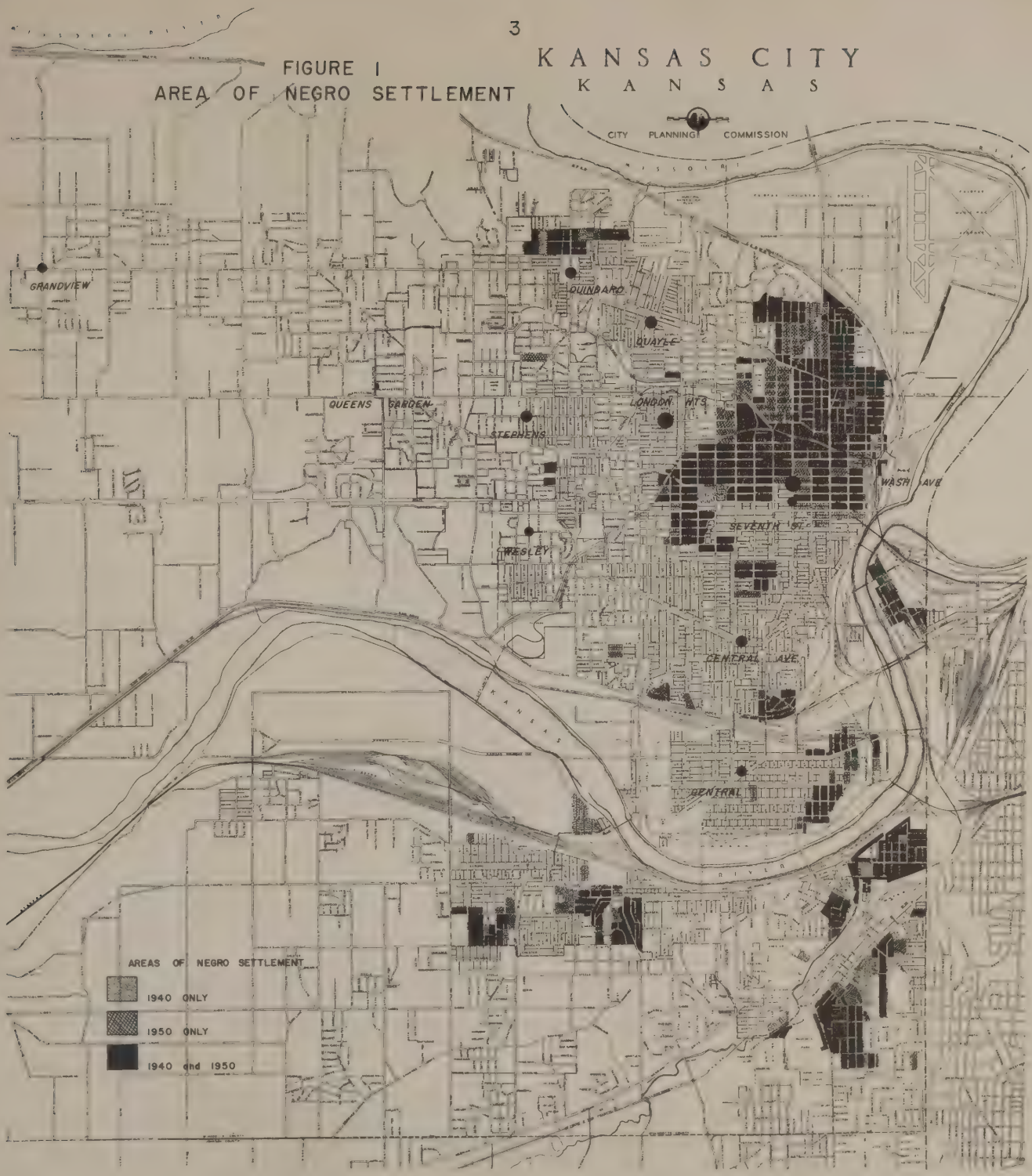
* Based upon best available estimates.

during the decade 1930-1940. However, it should be remembered that many cities across the United States also sustained population losses during this "hard" decennial period. Recent developments point to a steady but significant growth for both Kansas City and vicinity.

Suburban Population Trends. Specifically trends in Quindaro and Wyandotte townships may be noted in TABLE NO. I, also. Since 1900 population in Quindaro has quadrupled, going from 2,810 to more than eleven thousand inhabitants. Meanwhile Wyandotte doubled in population size.

Turning to the recent period of 1930-1950, it may be noted that both townships doubled in population growth while the city experienced only 6.3 per cent increase. This fact points significantly to the sensational growth in the suburbs. Quite rapidly the territory west of the city boundary is coming to life. Many subdivisions are opening up the township for ever more extensive residential development. New homes are being erected by the hundred.

FIGURE I
AREA OF NEGRO SETTLEMENT



Estimated Population in 1960. In TABLE NO. I may be found an estimate for the end of the present decade. These figures are prepared from the best available estimates. They have been adjusted to bring out a conservative perspective and to reflect the fairly rapid rise of the suburbs in contrast with the declining ratio of Kansas City residents in the survey area. The outcome is as follows: Kansas City 139,500; Quindaro Township 16,500; and Wyandotte Township 10,800. Possibilities for Methodist Church extension in the two townships should be fully explored and aggressively promoted. The time is ripe for this course of action.

NON-WHITE TRENDS & AREAS OF SETTLEMENT

The number of non-white persons who reside in Kansas City and vicinity is of importance to this survey of Methodist church work. Although the term "non-white" includes individuals who are Oriental and

TABLE NO. II
Non-White Population Trends, 1900-1950
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

	KANSAS CITY		WYANDOTTE COUNTY	
Year	Population	Per Cent Change	Population	Per Cent Change
1900	6,521	- - - -	8,984	- - - -
1910	9,335	43.2 gain	11,248	25.2 gain
1920	14,474	55.1 gain	16,827	49.6 gain
1930	22,696	56.8 gain	24,710	46.8 gain
1940	21,068	7.2 loss	23,055	6.7 loss
1950	26,660	26.5 gain	29,475	27.8 gain

Indian, only 70 out of nearly twenty-seven thousand persons in 1950 were other than Negro. Under such conditions one can safely regard this tiny fraction as negligible.

Non-White Trends in Kansas City. Four times as many Negroes now reside in Kansas City as in 1900. The summary of trends presented in TABLE NO. II reveals that during the past half century this population group increased from 6,521 to 26,660. A growth of 20,139 persons or 308.8 per cent was recorded. Since 1930 the rate of gain has slowed to the surprising 17.5 per cent or 3,964 persons. The individual decades of greatest increment were 1910-1920 (55.1 per cent) and 1920-1930 (56.8 per cent). Most of the growth occurred in the first three decades of the present century.

Non-White Trends in Wyandotte County. In general, non-whites are a city dwelling population. The American Indian is a possible exception. Hence data on non-white suburban residents show that a small number make their homes there. Information was unavailable by townships and therefore we are compelled to use county figures in TABLE NO. II. Where the city item is deducted from the Wyandotte County total one notes the following figures: 2,463; 1,913; 2,353; 2,014; 1,987; and 2,815. The numbers are for the decades 1900-1950 inclusive.

It can be pointed out that the county Negro population exclusive of Kansas City ranged from 1,913 to 2,815 persons during the first half of the twentieth century. Since these figures include additional territory beyond the survey area, one can see that Negroes are predominately settled in Kansas City rather than in the suburbs. No great change in this situation has occurred over the past half century.

Location of Non-White Residents, 1940 & 1950. A study was made of the place of residence of non-whites in the Methodist survey area. Selection of individual city blocks was based upon the race of the head of the household. Where ten per cent or more of the heads were non-white the block was taken. Here it was necessary to rely upon several important sources of information in (a) excellent reports prepared by the Kansas City Planning Commission, (b) bulletins published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and (c) personal visitation to the territory under discussion.

Charted materials are delimited to Kansas City. According to assembled information there exists one large and several smaller areas of Negro settlement. As shown on FIGURE 1, the large territory is bounded approximately as follows: north by Roswell Avenue; east by the Missouri Pacific Rail Road tracks; south by State Avenue; and west by the K. & M. Rail Road tracks and 10th Street. It is an irregularly shaped area, spilling over the designated boundaries to the west and to the south. Three-fourths (or approximately 21,000) of all Kansas City Negro citizens reside here.

Scattered smaller areas of Negro settlement are to be found flanking the railroad tracks or lining the banks of the Kansas River, especially south and east of the central business district. Generally speaking they consist of about a dozen city blocks. One small settlement is situated two blocks north of Quindaro Methodist Church.

Further, data presented on FIGURE 1 are a diagramatic synthesis of materials for both 1940 and 1950. The decennial information was integrated in order to reveal directions in which the areas of Negro settlement were expanding. This point is demonstrated by the cross-hatched city blocks. Negroes in large numbers have now taken up residence here. The phenomenon has two facets: (a) new blocks filled in which were already surrounded, and (b) new fringe blocks entered, representing expansion of the territory (westward movement). As is evident from a study of FIGURE 1, the dominant pattern is one of expansion toward the west.

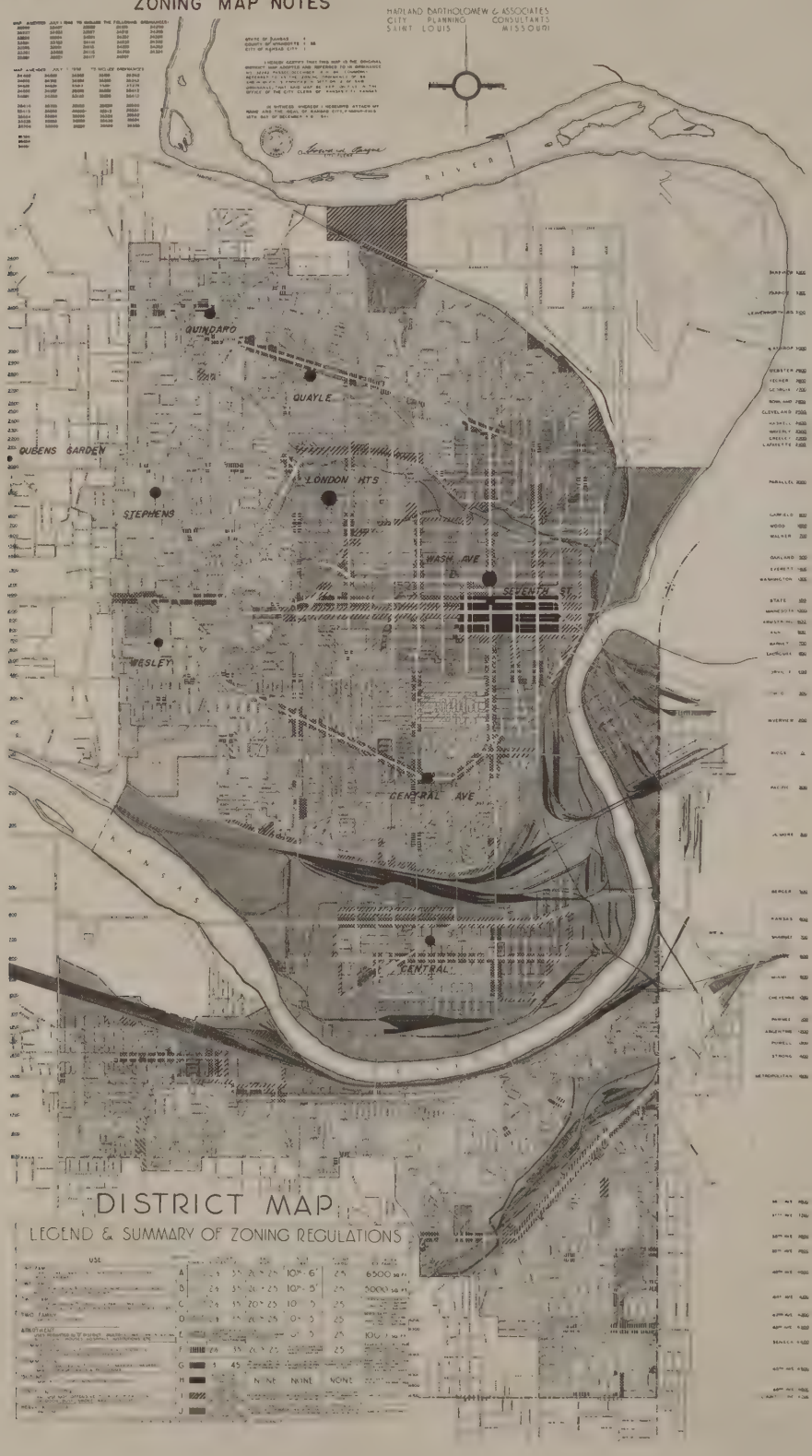
To point up the significance of this mapped information, the location of city Caucasian Methodist churches is shown. In view of the fact that Negroes customarily are localized into definite areas of settlement, religious leaders should study the situation in Kansas City. Particular attention should be drawn to the plight of Caucasian churches stranded on the edge or within these growing and changing Negro neighborhoods. The problem of a future ministry for such congregations is a critical one.

KANSAS CITY
KANSAS

FIGURE 2
ZONING MAP NOTES

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI



DISTRICT MAP

LEGEND & SUMMARY OF ZONING REGULATIONS

STRUCTURE OF SURVEY AREA

A study of the structure of the survey area can yield increased understanding of the problems and opportunities which confront the Methodist Church. Attention can be drawn to the extremely broken and irregular terrain along the south shore of the Missouri River. This and kindred instances coupled with land within reach of flood constitute very real obstacles to residential development. An outcome is the increased significance assigned to land midway between the two rivers (Missouri and Kansas) but out in the county, immediately west of the city boundary. At present this area is the most attractive for residential purposes and many builders have new homes under construction. This is high grade church extension territory.

City Zoning Uses. Further it is important for church leaders to become familiar with the pattern of land uses permitted within Kansas City. Methodist Churches are located on FIGURE 2 to bring out the significant relationship between church placement and permissible land use. Of particular negative importance are the areas set aside for heavy industrial use. Such territory generally flanks railroad trackage and runs along the shores of rivers. It is the source of much of the city's odor, smoke, dust, noise, etc. From the viewpoint of the church leader, it usually means low ground and/or non-residential use and/or blighted housing. Where such territory is extensive, it becomes an effective barrier to population movement and thus tends to divide the city into residential pockets or areas, each one of which is likely to be a somewhat inaccessible area in terms of the free movement of the population. Residential areas are formed by barriers. Church work is seriously affected by barriers. (consult Chapter VI, Church Work in the City by Frederick A. Shippey)

The downtown business district is clearly evident on FIGURE 2. It is shown in black and is centered approximately at the corner of Seventh Street and Minnesota Avenue. Secondary and neighborhood shopping areas are scattered across the city. To facilitate the reader's personal analysis of the situation, the location of existing Methodist churches is given. Both the physical structure and the practical functions of the city are matters of interest to religious leaders.

CHAPTER II

METHODIST TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS*

Against the background of the physical and population environment of Kansas City and vicinity, let us now examine the trends in Methodist membership and church school enrollment. This report covers the period 1900-1956. For convenience in analysis, the data are described in long term (1900-1956) trends and short term (1930-1956) trends. This account reveals the dynamic and ever changing fortunes of a denomination situated in an urban environment. It reveals a vivid and vital ministry.

MEMBERSHIP & CHURCH SCHOOL TRENDS

More than seven thousand church members and over sixty-five hundred church school persons are related vitally to the work of Methodism in Kansas City and vicinity. This is a significant religious enterprise.

The extent to which the denomination is thriving is disclosed in TABLE NO. III. Some materials on former Methodist Protestant and Methodist Episcopal South were unavailable. This accounts for most of the gaps in information noted in TABLE NO. III. Over the fifty-six year period, membership has increased remarkably. But rate has slowed down notably since 1930. Church school reported notable gains within the long term trend period but slowed sharply during the last quarter of the century.

Kansas City. Within the city proper are ten Methodist churches. All for which data are available (consult TABLE NO. III) have approximately doubled in membership size since 1900. Growth in London Heights and Quayle is especially noteworthy. The overall gain for the city was 5,011 persons or 329.7 per cent. This covers up the loss sustained of Central Avenue Methodist Church.

Church school work in Kansas City has done well on a long term

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* Consult Church Work in the City by Frederick A. Shippey, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952, for a detailed discussion of city church principles and program.

trend basis - gaining 3,103 individuals or 175.0 per cent. All reporting schools show gains. Outstanding growth was reported by Quayle, London Heights and Washington Avenue. Since 1930 positive trends have shrunk to an unsatisfactory 7.8 per cent. A closer examination of the fortunes of individual congregations reveals that four schools are shrinking - Central, Central Avenue, London Heights and Seventh Street. Together they report a loss of more than eleven hundred (1,141) persons. The exceptional gains of sister churches prevented a sharp decline in enrollment in the city. Thus one is forced to conclude that the work in this sphere is reaching scarcely more persons today than it did over a quarter of a century ago.

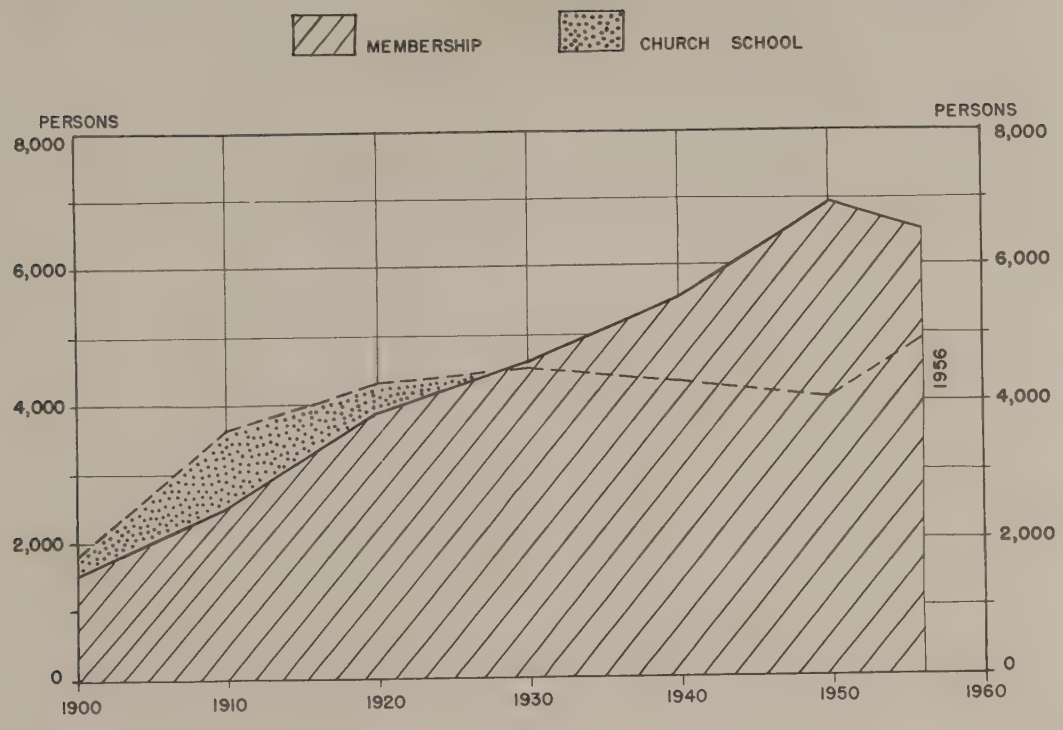
TABLE NO. III
Methodist Membership & Church School Trends, 1900-1956
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

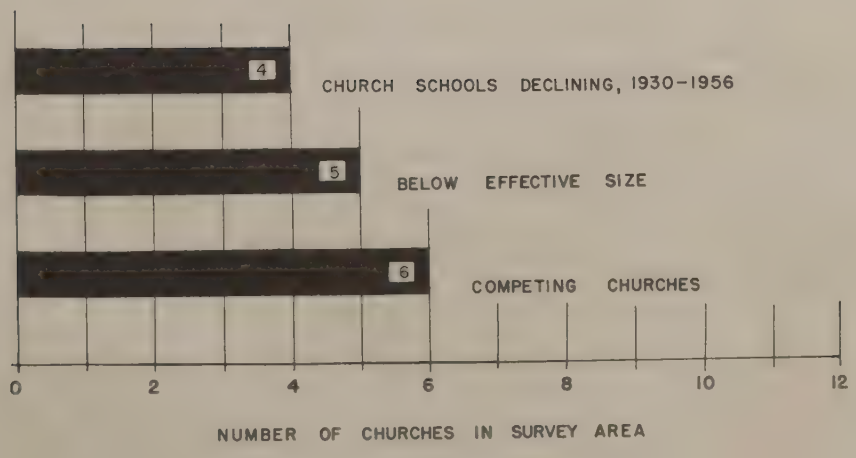
Church	Membership 1956	Membership Per Cent Change 1900-56	Membership Per Cent Change 1930-56	Enrollment 1956	Church School Per Cent Change 1900-56	Church School Per Cent Change 1930-56
CITY						
Central	503	+89.1	+5.2	299	+3.5	-21.3
Central Ave.	645	+180.4	-26.3	341	+14.8	-53.7
London Hts.	1208	+334.5	+7.1	710	+131.3	-44.1
Quayle	769	+426.7	+135.9	753	+356.4	+88.3
Queens Garden	174	-	-	300	-	-
Quindaro	595	-	+85.9	464	-	+18.4
Seventh St.	396	@	+31.6	216	@	-32.3
Stephens Mem.	722	@	@	625	@	@
Washington Ave.	1136	+184.0	+8.7	813	+57.9	+0.1
Wesley	383	-	+196.9	355	-	+66.7
Sub Total	6,531	+329.7	+41.9	4,876	+175.0	+7.8
SUBURBS						
Grandview	412	@	+235.0	636	@	+352.9
Grinter Chapel	171	@	+47.4	138	@	+48.4
Sub Total	583		+143.9	774		+229.4
GRAND TOTAL	7,114	-	+47.0	5,650	-	+18.7

Suburbs of Kansas City. The denomination's work in the suburbs appears to be thriving in a grand manner. (Consult TABLE NO. III) Although data are lacking before 1920, the direction of membership and church school enrollment trends in Quindaro and Wyandotte townships is positive and very encouraging. What appears as an outstanding need is additional Methodist churches in the suburbs. Many Methodists have already taken up residence out in the townships west of the city. Many new subdivisions have been opened, eventuating in the construction of hundreds of new homes. At present Methodist churches are too few and too scattered to bring an adequate ministry to Quindaro and Wyandotte townships.

FIGURE 3

METHODIST TRENDS & PROBLEMS





TOWARD EFFECTIVE CHURCH SIZE

A significant development respecting Methodism in Kansas City and vicinity is the pronounced trend toward effective urban church size. This comment and the remarks which follow apply to Methodist churches in the city and adjacent suburbs.

Survey experts are in agreement upon the effective size with regard to membership. A city church which has approximately five hundred or more active members is likely to have within it (1) a full range in quantity of leadership, (2) sufficient people to be organized within the various age groupings, (3) adequate economic resources to maintain an adequate plant and ministry on a self-supporting basis and (4) sufficient range in viewpoint and religious experience to provide a rich fellowship at the formal services of the institution. Experts in city church work agree that effective urban church strength is found to begin in a church of approximately five hundred members. (In downtown church work, the figure is one thousand members.)

With this criterion in mind let us look at Kansas City Methodism. In the present survey twelve local churches were studied. It is possible to trace each congregation (with the possible exception of several) back to the turn of the century and to examine membership size at that time. This information can be compared with the current situation and with other time points falling between 1900 and 1956.

The findings from such a comparison can be summarized as follows. No Methodist Church was of effective size at the turn of the century. By 1930 three congregations had reached the desired level of member strength. Now, at the beginning of 1957, it is to be noted that seven churches are of effective size for urban religious work. However, Queens Garden, Seventh Street, Wesley, Grandview and Grinter Chapel, can be expected to move up into the desired category. Possibly Grandview will reach the effective level very soon. A well-conceived and long-range plan of administration can lift all smaller churches to the desired level of effectiveness.

HOW METHODISTS EARN A LIVING

A summary of the distribution of employed church members is provided in TABLE NO. IV. Data were received from nine out of ten of the city Methodist Churches. Lacking are the materials from Central.

Committees of laymen assisted pastors in assembling the information. The occupational classifications used in the present report are those defined and utilized by the United States Bureau of Census in 1950. General population data are for that year also. Methodist materials, however, are for 1956. The time differential needs, of course, to be regarded but one should remember that the latest available information was utilized.

Approximately 2400 Methodist church members were reported in a

distribution covering eight occupational classifications. These gainfully employed persons are classified in TABLE NO. IV. One may note that data for population and for Methodism are placed in adjacent columns to facilitate comparisons. The calculation in each instance is a percentage. An asterisk placed beside selected figures aid the reader in noting important relationships.

Note at once that the figures for Methodism in the three top classifications (Prof., Tech., etc.; Mgrs., Off., Props.; and Clerical, Sales, etc.) exceed the entries for the general population. To emphasize this point the table itself is divided horizontally. In the lower

TABLE NO. IV
Occupations of Methodists and Population Compared by Per Cent
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

Occupational Group	Population	Methodist
WHITE COLLAR		
Prof., Tech., etc.	7.5	15.4*
Mgrs., Off., Props.	6.9	12.5*
Clerical, Sales, etc.	22.3	32.4*
MANUAL		
Craftsmen, Foremen	15.6	14.2
Operatives, etc.	25.1	13.7
Domestic Workers	2.1	0.8
Service Workers	10.1	8.7
Laborers	10.4	2.3
TOTALS	100.0	100.0

* Indicates higher percentage than in the population.

portion of TABLE NO. IV, Methodist percentages are conspicuously smaller than comparable figures for the general population.

Apparently the denomination encounters difficulty in reaching manual workers, i.e. persons engaged in the crafts and in ordinary labor. How serious this ineffectiveness really is can be gauged by the fact that the majority of persons gainfully employed at all are in this group. Whereas two-thirds of the employed general population are manual workers, only forty per cent of the Methodists work with their hands. This is the great majority which in earlier years, Methodism has served so well. Currently, Operatives and Laborers appear conspicuously to elude the ministry of the Methodist Church in Kansas City and vicinity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERS

Next we turn to a series of traits of church members. Brief treatment will be given to gainful employment, males, systematic contributors and per capita financial support. Information has been compiled and summarized by individual congregation. This focuses attention upon the important work of each local church. Materials from Central

Methodist Church are missing.

Employed Church Members. The data presented in TABLE NO. V includes information respecting the percentage of employed members by local church (column two). This statistic was found by dividing the number of employed persons by the number of members. Materials are for 1956. Seven of the twelve churches report forty per cent or more of

TABLE NO. V
Methodist Membership & Financial Characteristics, 1956
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

Church	Total Members 1956	Per Cent Employed	Per Cent Male	Per Cent Givers	Average Weekly Giving(¢)
CITY					
Central	503	@	@	@	@
Central Ave.	645	41.1	41.8	62.2	83
London Hts.	1208	31.4	44.4	63.2	98
Quayle	769	30.4	45.6	58.7	90
Queens Garden	174	42.5	45.3	65.9	147
Quindaro	595	25.4	46.6	55.8	91
Seventh St.	396	55.8	35.2	71.2	73
Stephens Mem.	722	42.2	42.4	57.6	58
Washington Ave.	1136	47.3	39.6	71.6	99
Wesley	383	46.2	41.0	65.0	77
Sub Total	6,531	35.9	42.3	63.7	89
SUBURBS					
Grandview	412	41.5	43.2	60.6	135
Grinter Chapel	171	35.7	39.9	47.4	105
Sub Total	583	39.8	42.2	56.7	127
GRAND TOTAL	7,114	36.2	42.3	63.0	92

its members engaged in some form of employment. A very high percentage usually indicates transitional area church work and/or numerous unmarried adults in the congregation.

The significance of these city and vicinity data rests partly in the number of salaries or pay checks which underlie the budget of the local church and partly in the practical implications for program planning. With reference to the former, however, no positive correlation has been found between size of income and the amount contributed to the support of a local church. With reference to the latter, occupation furnishes an important clue to leadership readiness and experience. Further, employed women often find it inconvenient to attend daytime programs. Such facts should be taken into account in church planning.

The Male Minority. Items entered in column three of TABLE NO. V

indicate the percentage of male members in each local church. Typically, though contrary to popular expectation, males are in a minority. It is exceptional for a city or suburban church to report more males than females in the membership.

Consider first the percentage range - from 35.2 (Seventh Street) to 46.6 (Quindaro). However, three churches (Seventh Street, Washington Avenue and Grinter Chapel) report less than forty per cent of their members as males. Indeed the fact that none of survey area churches reaches above forty-seven per cent lends support to the contention that the city church is a woman's church. The nature of the neighborhood and/or the recruitment pattern of membership may be partly responsible for the low percentage of men and boys in many churches.

What can be done in a situation where females predominate? Churches within the denomination may profitably examine their membership rolls to determine (1) wives whose husbands do not belong, (2) daughters whose parents have not joined, (3) sisters whose brothers have not affiliated, and (4) other persons in the family or dwelling facilities who should establish a formal relationship with the institution. The general Kansas City situation follows the pattern of urban Methodism elsewhere. The city church is weak in men, weaker than it needs to be.

Systematic Financial Support. A brief report on systematic financial support by members is given in columns four and five of TABLE NO. V. By definition, a systematic contributor is one who tithes, or contributes weekly or contributes sums of money monthly, quarterly, semiannually or annually in such fashion as to indicate an intent to support regularly the work of the local church and of World Service. All calculations here are based on active membership figures.

The percentage of active members who support the local church financially as described above is given in column four. In Kansas City proper the figure is 63.7. This means that nearly two-thirds of the active Methodists are financial supporters. How the situation varies among local churches is discovered from an inspection of TABLE NO. V. Quayle, Quindaro and Stephens report percentages in the fifties. Only Seventh Street and Washington Avenue have over seventh per cent of their active members as contributors. Out in the suburbs to the west the performance is somewhat lower than that in the city.

Approximately 3,200 Kansas City and vicinity Methodists do not contribute in any known systematic manner to the budgets of the churches with which they are affiliated. This is a source of genuine concern. Absence of a financial relationship is often an indication of failure to participate in the local church in other important ways.

Per Capita Financial Support. In the last column of TABLE NO. V is recorded the average weekly contribution per capita for Methodist members who support the local church systematically. The statistic was found by dividing the actual number of dollars contributed by the number of persons making the contributions and then the quotient was redivided

to secure a weekly figure. The answer is in cents.

In Kansas City, givers contribute on the average of 89 cents per capita. Among individual churches the amount ranges from 58 (Stephens Memorial) to 147 (Queens Garden). This range embraces suburban performance also. Indeed, only three churches (Queens Garden, Grandview and Grinter Chapel) belong in the honor group averaging more than one dollar per capita per week, although Washington Avenue and London Heights are very close with 99 and 98 respectively. It is significant when large churches achieve such high performance. Both of the congregations are serving members of modest economic circumstances.

The importance of these figures lies in the fact that they represent the "best" possible description of the local financial situation. Such figures are refined to give the individual contributor the maximum credit for his actual financial performance toward the local church. Often the mere bringing of the matter to attention is sufficient to generate action of the right sort.

CHAPTER III

PARISH GEOGRAPHY AND METHODIST PLANNING

There is a great deal of misinformation in circulation respecting the distance people reside from the church with which they are affiliated. This has caused bungling in the placement of new churches and in the relocation of older institutions. To assist local Methodist leaders in achieving a more realistic viewpoint, and to reduce possibly the number of needless mistakes, the following materials are briefly and graphically summarized.

PARISH BOUNDARIES AND SERVICE OUTREACH

Parish maps were procured from all twelve of the local Methodist congregations in the survey area. This complete coverage for both church membership and church school enrollment can yield a battery of helpful insights. Members of each local congregation were located on a map by place of residence by city block. Outside the city limits, locations were placed along the highways or side roads as accurately as possible.

These data gathered late in 1956 are summarized in TABLE NO. VI, and on FIGURE 4. In order to examine the parish dispersion of Methodist churches located in Kansas City and vicinity, it was deemed essential to discover how many members and how many church school enrollees resided within the service radius (one mile) of the church edifice. This information was laboriously compiled by counting map entries falling both within and outside the radius indicated.

Parish Dispersion in Kansas City. The dispersion of members affiliated with city churches is shown in the upper section of TABLE NO. VI. Slightly more than one-half (55.8 per cent) reside within one mile of the local church. This figure is lowered by the inclusion of churches located downtown (Seventh Street 30.9 per cent, and Washington Avenue 15.4 per cent) and of churches in special circumstances (London Heights 55.7 per cent, and Central 54.2 per cent). A city-wide percentage is bound to be seriously affected by the dispersed nature of large parishes. This is a fact in Kansas City. Five of the six remaining unmentioned parishes report over seventy-one per cent of their members residing

within one mile of the church edifice. This significant compact parish phenomena is hidden beneath the surface of a general or city-wide figure.

The Church School enrollment dispersion pattern parallels that of church membership in Kansas City. However, in nearly all instances the percentage figure is higher, revealing a more compact outreach. Central's percentage jumps from 54.2 to 64.4, while London Heights' increases from 55.7 to 73.1. Only Queens Garden and Washington Avenue are exceptions to the pattern. Normally the church school parish is more compact than that of the church membership. This may be true be-

TABLE NO. VI
Residence Proximity of Methodist Persons, 1956
Kansas City & Vicinity, Kansas

Church	Membership 1956	PER CENT WITHIN ONE MILE OF CHURCH Church Members	Church School
CITY			
Central	503	54.2	64.4
Central Ave.	645	67.1	72.1
London Hts.	1208	55.7	73.1
Quayle	769	82.2	85.1
Queens Garden	174	79.5	77.4
Quindaro	595	71.6	80.5
Seventh St.	396	30.9	45.3
Stephens Mem.	722	75.8	78.7
Washington Ave.	1136	15.4	12.4
Wesley	383	74.8	90.2
Sub Total	6,531	55.8	64.1
SUBURBS			
Grandview	412	78.2	75.7
Grinter Chapel	171	46.0	30.7
Sub Total	583	68.1	68.1
GRAND TOTAL	7,114	57.0	64.9

cause records in the former are inclined to be more up to date.

Suburban Parish Dispersion. Further, dispersion for the two suburban churches is shown in TABLE NO. VI. A contrast is disclosed by the data. Grandview represents the congregation drawn from a rapidly developing suburban neighborhood and hence shows more than three-fourths of its members and of its church school enrollees residing within a normal service radius - one mile. On the other hand, because Grinter Chapel approximates nearly open country conditions, it has the expected scattered parish - 46.0 per cent of its members and 30.7 per cent of its church school within the service mile. The percentage of persons who are willing to go the "second mile" to church around Kansas City is probably no higher than it was in Jesus' time. Distance remains the

FIGURE 4
A MASTER PARISH MAP

great enemy of urban religious work. In most cases suburban parishes are generally more compact than city parishes.

A MASTER PARISH MAP FOR KANSAS CITY

Each local church provided the survey director with a map upon which was recorded the place of residence, by city block, of members and church school enrollees. These data were studied carefully and the findings are summarized in the table referred to above and in FIGURE 4.

The statistical information has been discussed in the preceding section. Let us now turn to examine the master map phenomena. The location of each church plant is revealed on FIGURE 4 by a circle in black. Size of church by total membership (1956) is shown by circles of varying area. The map legend indicates the circle size in a "balloon" scale. Obviously the circle for Washington Avenue Methodist will be larger than that required for Central Methodist Church. In each case the area of the circle used corresponds with total membership size.

Next, parish configuration lines were drawn on the original local church maps, enclosing the major concentration of members reached by parish work. For instance, the majority of persons reached by Central Avenue Methodist Church reside to the west of the church plant. The individual line shows what the facts warrant.

Similarly a parish configuration line was drawn for each of the other Methodist churches from whom this datum was received. The general outline of current parish work is shown on FIGURE 4. Note especially the lines drawn for Queen's Garden, Central and Grandview. The compact parish is strongly evident. This is true even among suburban churches. Indeed, all new congregations should be considered to be of this basic type. Unless a church has a prominent and significant anchorage among people of the immediate neighborhood, it is likely to be an impermanent project.

Other church parishes are interesting also. Since Washington Avenue and Seventh Street possess widely scattered constituencies, it was not feasible to attempt to draw parish configuration lines. Their ministry differs fundamentally from that of other Methodist churches in the city and suburbs. However, the question must be raised: Does Kansas City need two Methodist Churches downtown? Further, congregations located in changing neighborhoods or caught in a transitional stage disclose that peculiar condition in parish dispersion patterns. Often a single change of pastors weakens the congregation to a point of financial insolvency. Any postponement in facing this total situation squarely leads to confusion and religious ineffectiveness.

Overlapping parish work is indicated also on FIGURE 4. Where two or more Methodist parishes are too close to one another (less than one and a half miles) and hence compete for constituents from identical territory, a simple shading on the map is given. These churches interfere with and/or duplicate each other's ministry. Needless waste is the

appropriate designation for the condition. It is intolerable in a denomination's strategy in a modern city.

This master map of Kansas City has been produced in order to bring together dispersion information from the individual local churches. Appropriately one may note that the basic structure of the city as defined by topographical barriers, various types of land not-in-residential use and areas of settlement for Negroes emphasizes the relevance of the present analysis. In the present discussion the master parish map indicates how important it is to compare the city's basic structure with parish dispersion data. The contours of local church configurations are as often caused by the position of urban barriers as by the termination of service outreach. Five considerations emerge from the present analysis.

1. The dominant pattern of urban Methodist church work is to cultivate the area which lies within the service radius (one mile) of the church edifice. This is clearly evidenced in Kansas City and vicinity Methodism and therefore the work of the denomination locally is typical of city church work elsewhere. Certain features appear in nearly every metropolitan community.

2. A downtown or "voice" church tends to draw persons from greater distances, but commonly sacrifices the intense cultivation of all of the territory from which it "skims." Washington Avenue and Seventh Street feature this type of ministry. Both have widely scattered constituents. This is a duplicatory ministry. Can Kansas City Methodism afford the luxury of two downtown churches? It is doubtful that it can.

3. When urban churches of the same denomination are placed too close to one another, overlapping inevitably occurs. The vicious evils of competition and odious comparison are omnipresent under such circumstances no matter how externally gracious congregations so placed may appear toward each other. Physical contiguity issues in debilitating competition. Prospective members are compelled to make a choice between two or more Methodist churches. This is an unfortunate development and usually results in the ultimate deterioration of a charitable spirit between the two congregations. Six Methodist Churches in Kansas City find themselves in competition with another. Consult FIGURES 4 and 5.

4. Churches located in transitional areas should investigate fully and evaluate carefully the nature of the changes occurring within the normal service radius (one mile) of the church plant. Appropriate plans can then be drafted respecting the uncertain future. Be sure to note especially the changes in terms of ethnic and economic characteristics.

5. A study of city and suburban areas which are currently out-of-reach of a Methodist church should be undertaken. Special attention should be given to new residential developments to the west along various highways. Church extension is an important emphasis in the present

quadrennium. Several new Methodist churches are needed in greater Kansas City to keep pace with population growth. Allocations properly should be sought through the comity committee of the local council of churches where such organization exists.

CHAPTER IV

HIGHLIGHTS, PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Thus far, attention has remained focussed primarily upon various data gathered expressly for this study of Methodism in Kansas City and vicinity. We have seen the materials analyzed, placed in tabular form, charted, and then discussed from the viewpoint of the practical problems which arise in the denomination's work. Now what remains to be done is to draft a summary of the highlights, to delineate the key problems and to append general recommendations.

SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

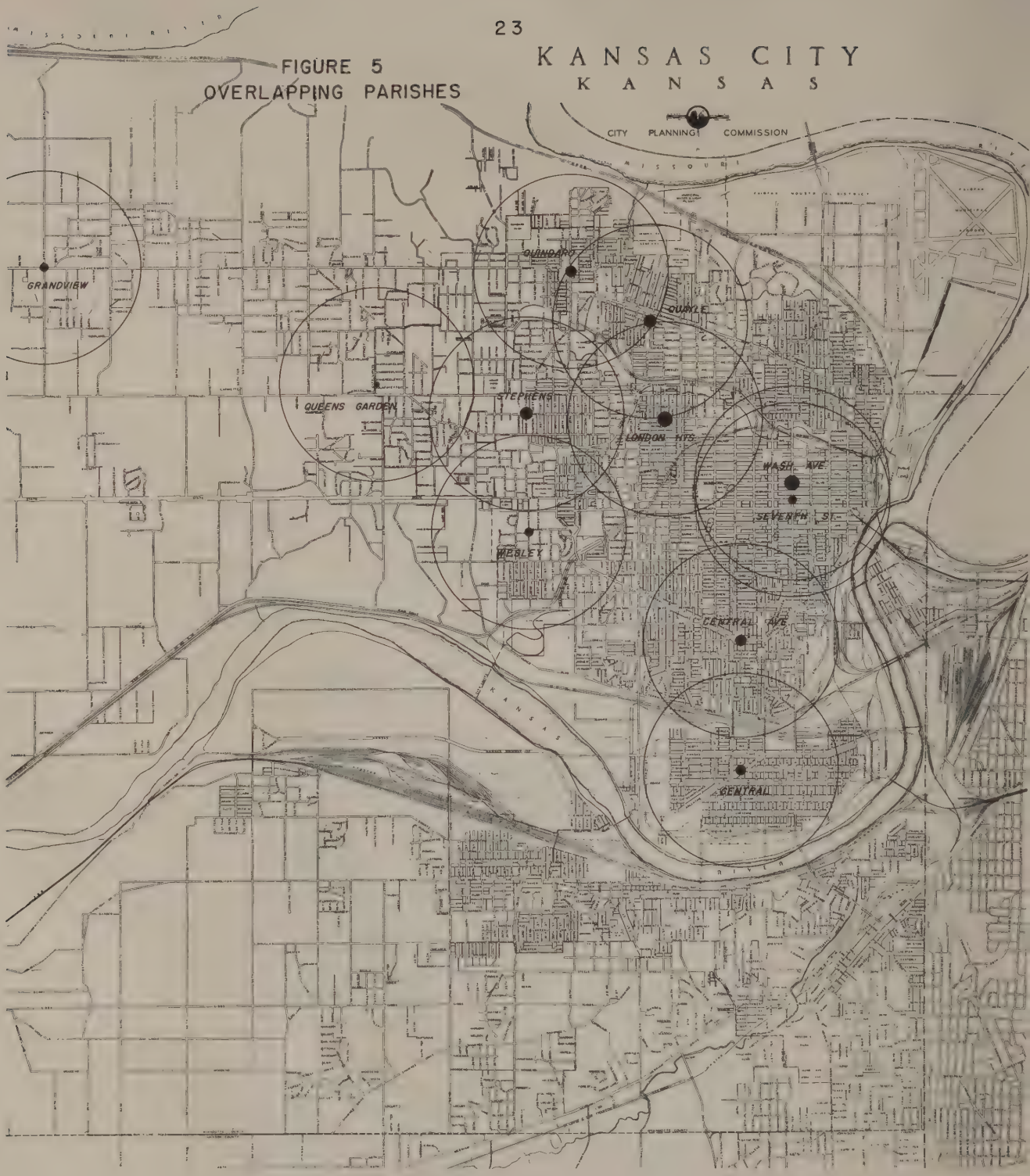
The materials gathered in the present survey can be summarized under nine headings. It will be our task to select the principal highlights in a practical recapitulation.

1. General Population Trends. The population of the survey area currently approximates one hundred fifty thousand people. This represents an average gain of about one thousand persons per year since 1900. Kansas City proper is relatively static, although an increase of ten thousand persons is expected during the current decade, 1950-1960. By way of contrast both Quindaro and Wyandotte Townships are expanding population-wise quite rapidly. Each township is expected to add enough persons in the period 1950-1960 to make one or two additional churches. This trend continues the significant suburban development in the survey area begun a decade or two earlier. Within the city population gains are modest; outside to the west they are vigorous, more extensive and full of promise for church extension.

2. Negro Trends. Approximately twenty-seven thousand Negroes now reside in Kansas City, representing a gain of twenty thousand since 1900. Only one Negro out of ten in the survey area makes his home in the township. Here as elsewhere in the United States Negroes are predominantly city residents. It is reasonable to expect this ratio to continue into the foreseeable future. Indeed population growth may be expected to keep pace with job opportunities in Kansas City.

3. Where Negroes Live. From information gathered the reader

FIGURE 5
OVERLAPPING PARISHES



may note that Negroes reside in definite areas of settlement (FIGURE 1, page 3) across the city. The single large settlement lies immediately north of the central business district and the eight smaller ones are widely scattered. The location and size of these territories has an important bearing upon the present and future work of Methodism. The denomination's fortunes are at stake in some parts of the city. However, the phenomena in Kansas City follows a pattern relatively common among U.S. cities.

4. Zoning and City Structure. Some notes on permissible land-use have been incorporated into the present survey report. Popularly known as zoning, the materials call attention to bands of territory flanking railroad tracks and rivers which are set aside for industrial uses. Such bands are barriers which divide a city into residential territories which make the latter relatively inaccessible to each other. The structure of the city arises from non-residential land uses, from irregularities of terrain and from primary barriers (rivers, cemeteries, factories, etc.). Methodism has to reckon with this relatively permanent structure of the metropolitan area and to adjust the location of its congregations in the most effective pattern feasible.

5. Methodist Church Trends. Methodism is a part of the life of the survey area. This involvement is reflected in the vital trends of the denomination. Currently seven thousand church members and over sixty-five hundred church school persons are related to the work of Methodism. Approximately one resident out of fifteen is a Methodist. Membership has quadrupled since 1900. Church School enrollment has increased two and a half times its former size. Some individual congregations did better than others. However since 1930 a general deceleration has occurred, dropping membership gain down to forty-two per cent and church school to less than ten per cent. The opposite situation obtains in the township. Both membership and church school have doubled in size, with the latter creatively leading the way.

6. How Methodists Earn a Living. Approximately twenty-four hundred Methodist church members are gainfully employed. Three out of five are engaged in the white collar occupations. The remaining forty per cent earn a living with their hands either in the skilled trades or in other manual work. Among the general population in the survey area this ratio is completely reversed. Currently, Operatives and Laborers appear conspicuously to elude the ministry of the Methodist Church in Kansas City and vicinity. This situation cannot be fully explained by the presence in the population of foreign-born and their descendents who are traditionally Roman Catholic. What ought to be considered and implemented is a widened ministry to persons who earn their daily bread by the work of their hands. This is a traditional Methodist ministry.

7. Women Predominate Among Members. Six Methodists out of ten are female. The Kansas City situation is about typical of the denomination's urban success in this respect. Three congregations especially (Seventh Street, Washington Avenue and Grinter Chapel) show percentages of above sixty per cent. The condition reflects a strong

recruitment procedure among women and a much less effective one among males. The city church is weak in men, weaker than it needs to be.

8. Financial Support of Churches. Only 63.0 per cent of the active members contribute systematically to the support of the Methodist Churches. This pattern varies from congregation to congregation but yields 3,200 Kansas City and vicinity Methodists who do not contribute in any known manner to the budgets of the churches with which they are affiliated. Those who do give average only 92 cents. Among individual congregations the figure sinks as low as 73 cents (Seventh Street). Only three local churches average more than one dollar per person per week. It appears that Kansas City Methodism should make an effort to increase the number of contributors and to raise the amount per capita support. Each local congregation can and should look at its performance critically.

9. Parish Outreach. An analysis of parish maps revealing the place of residence of all Methodist members and church school enrollees in the survey area disclosed a striking thing. Most of the parishes are compact, drawing a high percentage of constituents from territory immediately adjacent to the edifice. Stephens Memorial, Quayle and Queens Garden illustrate this point strikingly. By way of contrast Seventh Street and Washington Avenue attract members from across the city, thereby "skimming" the metropolitan territory. When these two types of parish dispersion are combined, one discovers only 57.0 per cent of the members and 64.9 per cent of the church school reside within a mile of the Methodist Church with which they are affiliated. Obviously the figures are distorted abnormally by the unwarranted duplication of religious work downtown and by the inclusion of churches in open suburbs and in transitional territory.

PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Some attention has already been given to the statement of problems and principles related to solutions. Twelve public meetings on the field furnished opportunities for comment, discussion and questions. The writer has encouraged a full exploration of the general situation and of specific local congregational problems. What follows, then, consists of a brief restatement of what has already been thoroughly covered orally. However, denominational action may be galvanized by a focussed summary.

1. Watch Membership & Enrollment Trends. Constant vigilance is needed respecting church trends. A warning is implicit in negative trends. They tell that something is wrong. Sometimes the hidden problem is related to administrative considerations within the congregation. Just as often, however, it points to significant population and housing changes which are occurring in the neighborhood around the church. Thus negative trends are symptoms of a deeper malady. Religious leaders need to probe beneath the surface of conditions to find the cause and to launch remedial measures in time. Only a foolish man ignores danger signals.

2. Adjust Overlapping Parishes. As has been noted in the survey report, churches placed too close to one another and not separated by primary barriers (rivers, railroad yards, industrial installations, etc.) are competitive. They compete for a constituency. No urban Methodist church should be closer than one and a half miles to a sister congregation within the denomination. Kansas City has six churches in competition. Where such conditions of competition do exist, the situation should be adjusted as soon as possible. Two solutions are feasible - relocation of one congregation to the suburbs or a possible merger of the two churches. In any case, a thorough exploration of the situation is warranted. Then a course of action needs to be developed which will strengthen the work of the Kingdom of God. No local church should selfishly cling to a ministry which cannot be regarded as beneficial to the work of the denomination as a whole. It takes Christian teamwork to serve a city.

3. Bring Church Up to Effective Size. Small churches reveal the presence of unsolved problems. In the city there are at least five principal causes of smallness: (a) the misplaced church, struggling vainly to overcome the handicap of an ineffective location; (b) the competing church, waging a war of attrition against sister Protestant units; (c) the stranded church, progressively impoverished in a declining neighborhood; (d) the penalized church, trapped hopelessly in a residential pocket too circumscribed to provide an adequate Protestant constituency; and (e) the newly-established church, displaying smallness only as a temporary characteristic. Perhaps in the last instance only may we regard diminutiveness as an inevitable trait. Here is the heart of the matter. Smallness is evidence of an unsolved problem rather than an ideal goal toward which a local congregation strives. Every Kansas City and vicinity church should consider its present level of effectiveness and enter a course of action designed to correct any discovered weakness. A congregation can accelerate its rate of growth.

4. Establish New Congregations. The recent growth of 15,000 inhabitants over the period of 1940-1950 in Kansas City and in Quindaro and Wyandotte townships, plus the remarkable residential developments occurring in many parts of the suburbs should galvanize Methodism into action. An additional 19,000 residents is expected by 1960. As noted on FIGURES 4 and 5 there is a wide band of suburban territory lying between the city and outlying churches. This is an open invitation to congregations seeking relocation sites in the townships and to the district committee looking for church extension possibilities. The denomination needs to reach out and in one way or another bring a Methodist ministry to the territory. This means an intensification and acceleration of work already nobly begun.

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